



Southeast High Speed Rail Corridor

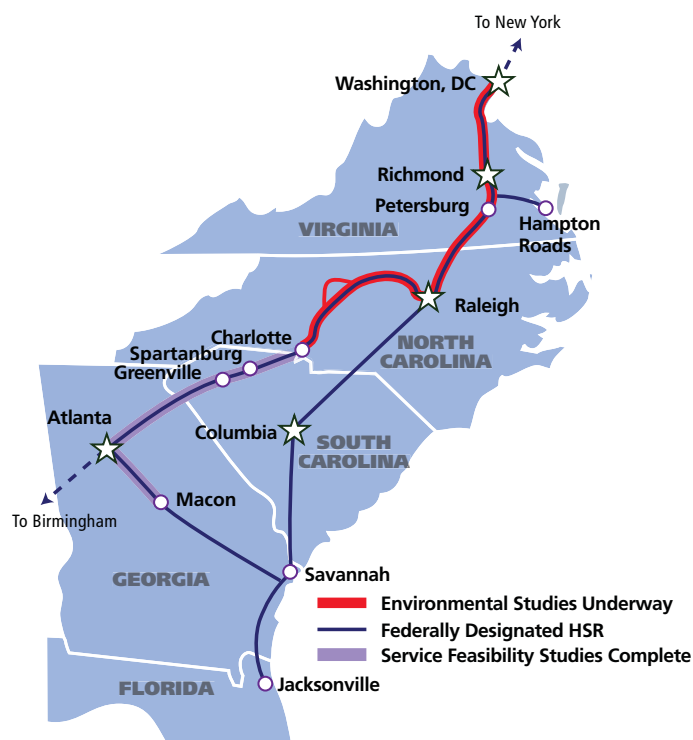
- The U.S. Department of Transportation designated Charlotte to Washington, D.C. as a high-speed rail corridor in 1992. In 1998, SEHSR was expanded south to Macon, Ga. and to Jacksonville, Fl.
- North Carolina, Virginia, South Carolina and Georgia partnered to form a 4-state coalition to develop the Southeast High Speed Rail Corridor to provide frequent, reliable passenger trains that can travel at top speeds of 90–110 miles per hour, and an average speed of 86 mph.
- The corridor is being developed incrementally, upgrading existing railroad right of way.
- Benefits of the SEHSR corridor will include enhancing local economies, revitalizing urban centers, improving track safety and capacity, and contributing to environmental sustainability.

Environmental impact studies

- The first part of a two-part environmental study for the Washington, D.C. to Charlotte portion of the corridor was completed in October 2002. This phase used public involvement to examine the need for the project and look at potential impacts on both natural and man-made environments along nine possible routes. A preferred corridor was determined between Petersburg, Va. and Raleigh.
- Virginia and North Carolina are proceeding with the next phase of the environmental study to provide a detailed analysis on the impacts, including track location, station arrangement and design.

ARRA applications

NCDOT submitted applications for stimulus money to fund 10 projects totaling \$5.4 billion for track improvements necessary to develop the SEHSR corridor. Projects include doubling the size of the Cary train station, rehabilitating locomotives and passenger equipment, and completing studies that would lay the ground for extensions to Western and Southeastern North Carolina. NCDOT worked with the North Carolina Railroad Company, Norfolk Southern Railway, CSX Transportation and Amtrak to complete applications.



Existing and Future Passenger Service

- North Carolina has 3,384 miles of railroad track and 12 passenger trains serving 16 cities daily.
- Over the past 15 years, the N.C. Department of Transportation has invested about \$300 million in the state's intercity passenger rail service, including renovation or construction of train stations, track work improvements and corridor preservation. Train travel time between Raleigh and Charlotte has been reduced by one hour.
- A total of 697,921 passengers boarded trains in North Carolina in 2009.

Additional Mid-day Service

Currently, *North Carolina's Amtrak* is a fleet of two state-supported trains, the *Piedmont* and *Carolinian*, which provide daily service to Raleigh, Greensboro, Charlotte, nine other North Carolina cities and to the Northeast. Trains are sponsored by NCDOT and paid for through state funding, Amtrak and passenger fares. An additional mid-day roundtrip between Raleigh and Charlotte is planned to begin this spring to meet increasing passenger demand.

Western North Carolina

In March 2001, NCDOT adopted a phased plan to extend passenger rail service to Asheville and Western North Carolina. The plan includes renovating or building train stations that incorporate other community uses. The department continues to work with communities on station and rail safety improvements while working to identify funding to restore passenger rail service to Western NC.

Southeastern North Carolina

In May 2001, NCDOT released results of a feasibility study that indicated there is interest in passenger rail service to and from Wilmington. In July 2005, the department released the results of more detailed studies that identified costs and some needed improvements for re-establishing service to Southeastern North Carolina. The study recommended implementing passenger rail service from Raleigh to Wilmington via Fayetteville and Goldsboro in phases as funding becomes available. Other recommendations included investigating the possibility of commuter service between Selma and Raleigh and working with the State Ports to define benefits and investments needed to re-establish freight service between Goldsboro and Wilmington.

Safety Improvements

Sealed Corridor Program

Since 1992, North Carolina has received special federal funds to improve railroad crossing safety between Raleigh and Charlotte. These improvements will protect citizens and enable higher train speeds. In essence, NCDOT is "sealing" the corridor by protecting every public crossing with median separators, longer gate arms, four-quadrant gates and other innovative signage and traffic-control devices. The department is also safeguarding private crossings by installing improved signage and warning devices. The Federal Railroad Administration recently named the Sealed Corridor Program as the national standard.

